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614 835 situations inevitably lead to jealousy, fighting, and the splitting of the group. By their regulations the Lepchas have reduced intra-group aggression to the minimum. The potential rivalry between father and son is mitigated by taking the arrangements for the child's marriage entirely out of the parents' hands; the potential rivalry between brothers is mitigated by allowing the younger brother access to his more favoured and stronger elder brother's wife, while making the relationship between an elder brother and his younger sister-in-law strongly incestuous. In this connection it is [538] worth while noting that in the very large and elaborate Lepcha folk-lore and mythology I did not come upon a single instance of the otherwise almost universal compensatory story of the conflict between brothers, in which the despised, or ill-used younger brother or sister makes good after the elders have failed.

152 There is no specific word for 'jealousy' in Lepcha. When I presented hypothetical jealous situations to Lepchas and asked them what their feelings would be, the greater number say they would be angry; but this word, *sak-lyak*, does not carry very strong emotional connotations; it is the word used by parents if their children are naughty, or by workmen if they come across an unexpected difficulty in their work. It is also the most general euphemism [195] for a sexual erection; I cannot untangle the associations which have produced this metaphor, but there is no question that the word is used in both senses; more than once I have heard a workman say when, for example, cords have got tangled 'I am as angry as a standing penis.' Despite the one-directioned sex-words, sexual [831] activity is never openly equated with aggression; it is generally believed that both sexes enjoy it equally, though a few people maintained that women enjoy it more; almost all were agreed that women enjoy it later in life than men do. On the other hand [832] point may be given to the metaphor by the fact that during copulation only the man is active; the woman lies completely passive and relaxed.

152 831 The Lepchas of Zongu have dissipated nearly all the highly-charged emotional feelings which in many other societies are centred around sex, and on the whole neither sexual activity nor jealousy are strong motivating factors in their lives. There are a few exceptions to this generalisation; the quarrels fostered by the outsider, Mrs. Jiroong, have already been described in Chapter Three; and married women who show marked preference even for perfectly hereditable spouses, and married men who show preference

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787 Kurma foretold my headache with the following dream: he saw me walking along the riverbank with his mother-in-law, came to salute me, and I gave him a silver rupee. Later in the day I asked him to repeat the dream which he did as follows:—'The Sahib[2] dressed in his usual clothes went to the valley with my mother-in-law. I was coming from the forest along the river and I saluted the Sahib with joined hands[3] whereupon he presented me with a silver rupee. I then said to my mother-in-law "The sahib has come to see us: what can we set before him as a present?" My mother-in-law replied "The sahib has come to walk and to fish in the river; we have nothing suitable for him—no chickens, no eggs. What can we give?" After that I woke up.'

The interpretation of the dream was fulfilled; to dream that you are given silver means that you will get a good drink of *chi*, and this was fulfilled when Kurma called on the Mandal earlier in the day to discuss village affairs with him. The mother-in-law in my company showed that I was the victim of a female devil Langteun *a-nyou* who brings head-ache and eye-ache and thirst. Any ugly or dirty or badly-dressed woman represents this devil; the fact that it was his mother-in-law was without significance.(!) Had the head-ache persisted I should have hired a Mun to drive the devil away with offerings of *chi* and incense.

776 779 The demonology and, to a lesser extent, the hagiology of lamaism and the Mun religion are unified by a system of cross-identification in the two mythologies. Devils, and to a lesser extent gods, in one mythology are equated with differently-named supernaturals with similar attributes in the other. It thus happens that supernaturals have nearly all two names at least; but for Lepchas, as has been said, names are impermanent and without significance and no discomfort is felt from this. Some extraordinary tangles result from these identifications: the most popular lamaist god, called alterna-

I put these remarks down to courtesy. In fact, however, I was taken ill within a week of leaving Lingthem and had to go into hospital almost immediately on returning home. I did not recollect Tafoor's repeated prophecies till some months later, when going over my notes.

● [795] [2] The polite Lepcha term for a European is *Sé-pano*, which I believe to be a corruption of Sahib. *Pano* means a king, but the first syllable is apparently meaningless. The less polite word is *mik-dum*—white eyes. Europeans or fair people in dreams are good-omened, dirty people ill-omened.

[576] [3] The two hands cupped together and held in front of the breast is a respectful attitude and gifts must always be received with joined hands, to indicate that the gift, whatever its nature, is overpoweringly large.

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754 eye. On the other hand ' When Tang-li Mun sacrifice they do so
756 with benevolence in their heart towards the people and houses to which they are summoned.' It is thought that none of the Mun now inhabiting Lingthem are evil, though one lived there about a score of years ago; there are however some in other villages. The type of Mun a person becomes depends on his or her teacher, and not on the possessing spirit.

159 I think the best way of describing the possession and functions
756 of a Mun is to repeat the description of his spiritual life given by Gongyop. For the greater part I was not able to take down his exact words, for he speaks extremely quickly and very easily falls
[195] into the sing-song rhythm of a Mun's invocation, often saying the same thing twice or four times in different words, rather after the fashion of the Hebrew psalmist. He uses onomatopoeic words a great deal, many of his own invention. He has a prodigious memory and once started goes on like a clock-work machine; but if he is interrupted his train of thought breaks down and he cannot extract one point out of a sequence for elaboration.

Gongyop is far more in demand than any other Mun in the village; he officiates in nearly all the ceremonies except those which are performed in families of which a member is a Mun. When sacrificing he falls into what is almost a very light trance; his eyes become glazed and unfocussed as he intones his rhythmic chants. He is a man of forty-six, with a rather whimsical and wild-eyed expression and very small and expressive hands. He is easily amused and laughs freely. He is very nervous and jumps perceptibly at any sudden sound, a thing no other Lepcha does; he is aware of his peculiarity and ascribes it to a fall he had from a bamboo when he was thirteen. After that fall blood spurted from his ears and he couldn't see and for a time lay like one dead. Three years later he had another fall, but was not hurt much and climbed the tree again. Nowadays he says he can't climb big trees; if he were to do so he would feel giddy. Even in normal life he suffers from giddiness; ' his eyes turn ' and he can't see properly. He can't walk along a cliff; the ground feels as though it were moving up and down, nor can he walk among big trees for he feels that they are going to fall on him. He has frequent unpleasant dreams of
[152] falling down or flying down. I did not come across similar nervousness or anxiety among any of the other Lepchas whether Mun or laymen, and such instability is in no way essential for a Mun.

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831 522 the impression that they had been caught out in a breach of formal manners to which sensible people did not pay any attention.

834 522 Young unmarried girls did not on the whole join in these jokes, though they might laugh at them; boys started making them at about the age of fourteen. Girls and young women were very careful about exposing their bodies and often a great deal of fuss went on if a father or husband brought up a girl to have sores on her leg dressed; I think some of the women did feel genuinely distressed at having a stranger touch their legs before witnesses. Grown men were also fairly modest before me, but the younger men and boys were not; if they had torn pants or no pants, and thereby exposed themselves, this was a cause for laughter rather than confusion. On occasion, especially when we first arrived, women would reproach young children for showing their nakedness; this was always done very quietly and in a calm voice without emotion; the warning was often observed for quite two minutes after the woman had spoken. Excessive modesty of speech or action is a great part of the pattern of respectful behaviour, and is enjoined towards parents-in-law and social superiors; except in these situations it is considered a juvenile trait which people grow out of; it is usually given as the chief reason for the difficulty of establishing the marriage of young people on a firm basis. It is a legitimate subject for teasing; and one of the permanent jokes of the younger men was to push the more modest women into my arms, or to tell them that if they wanted really good medicine they should come and visit me late in the evening. A few of the girls seemed really distressed at this behaviour and all attempted to appear bashful; but with many the pretence was not successful.

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191 537 Speech has very great importance for the Lepchas. Indeed, apart from such knowledge as is necessary for the priests of the different religions, it may be said to represent their art, their science, and their intellectual entertainment. To be able to speak well is after being able to work well the highest social commendation. A good speaker is always in demand, and is essential on formal occasions, such as the entertainment of a stranger, or as *bek-bu* in marriage transactions.

195 537 There are two kinds of excellency in speech; first there is the person with an elegant vocabulary, and second the person with a

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[537] large repertoire of stories. In Lepcha speech there are two kinds of 195 variation to the everyday vocabulary for added richness and elegance; there is the honorific vocabulary, and allusive periphrasis, or *tang-bor*. The honorific vocabulary consists, I am informed, entirely of loan words from Tibetan or Sikkimese; it is meant always to be used to social superiors, but in Zongu only a few of these honorific words are current, and then only in connection with religion. The honorific terms for the parts of the body are used in describing supernaturals, and the honorific terms for 'presents' and 'to offer' are used for religious gifts and sacrifices. Those who can manage this honorific vocabulary would use it in talking to representatives of the State.

The *tang-bor* on the other hand are used a great deal. The nearest parallel to a *tang-bor* is an analogy or comparison which is used in the place of the idea which is intended to be conveyed. To give a somewhat over-simplified illustration, it is as though an Englishman were to say 'I am a horse' or 'I am a lord', instead of 'I am as hungry as a horse' 'I am as drunk as a lord'. A great number of these *tang-bor* are traditional; a good speaker however will make up his own. Quite a number are now incomprehensible, either because the references are forgotten, because they retain archaic terms, or because they have been borrowed from another district. A great number of the allusions are local, and a stranger will often be unable to understand the local *tang-bor*. Some are used for toning down disagreeable or shocking expressions, such as 'he has closed his eyes' for 'he is dead', 'the maize harvest is ripe' for 'has a sexual erection'. Others are humorous: a monkey is called 'pretty-face', a he-goat 'daddy-talk-too-much'; Lepchas are referred to as 'the drinkers', Nepali as 'the contradictory ones'. Others again are descriptive; the bear is 'he who leans forward', the fish 'he who throws away water', stolen goods 'prison come after'. *Tang-bor* can be used as a secret language, but it is chiefly [198] employed for elegance and humour. In stories, especially the semi-historical stories, the principal characters always speak to one another in *tang-bor*.

537 Story-telling is the major Lepcha art and distraction. The [517] favourite of all situations for story-telling is round the fire after work in the evenings; on these occasions the long stories will be told, stories which may take five or six evenings in their telling, one person doing the talking and the others listening. But this is not the only time when stories are told; in long tedious work, such as

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or fruits, or kick them about, or perhaps improvise syphons out of bamboo. Very often at feasts and large gatherings half a dozen children will play simultaneously at the same thing, but each playing by himself. At the numerous feasts and ceremonies I was present at over three months I only once saw children playing together, and this was a tug-of-war which lasted two or three minutes.

One of the chief pursuits of the older boys is the imitating of bird calls and the catching of small birds, usually in bamboo and thread snares. Nearly every boy over the age of nine could imitate bird calls accurately through whistling, and some of them were extraordinarily good at it; Chimpet in particular was so exact that unless I looked I could never tell whether it was a boy or a bird calling. Besides this direct imitation of bird calls, which is often used to lure birds to snares, the Lepchas have nonsense-syllable equivalents (similar to our *tu-wit to-whoo*), most of them extremely unlike the calls they represented, though the Lepchas maintained they were accurate. If the boys catch edible birds in their snares they take them home as presents to their mothers. A few of the older boys also learn to make and play bamboo flutes, receiving instruction from some older brother or friend.

When children do play together it is always an imitation of adult life (the one rare exception is the imitation of fighting animals). The courtyard outside the house is the favourite scene for these plays; using small sticks or bamboos which they cut with their little knives they play at building houses or making bridges or at fencing fields; at other times they may intimate a marriage or the performance of some religious ceremony. These plays are relatively rare, for they demand the simultaneous liberty of four or five children, which does not occur very often. They hold very little place in the childhood memories of adults. The chief things adults seem to remember from their childhood are physical mishaps, usually from falling, and being punished; nearly all adults remember being carried by their elders before they could walk properly.

Children between the ages of five and ten have a special almost private vocabulary which they use in talking to one another and which is much employed in their plays. Part of this vocabulary is baby words—deformations of ordinary Lepcha speech and onomatopoeic words; the rest is made up of rather violent terms of abuse—*pahoo ʒo*, may you be a feast for devils!, *kan-tit*, heap of

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192 dirt !—and so on. As a child grows up he will completely abandon this language, and older people seem quite honestly to forget it.
● 195 Rather like English preparatory school slang, these words only have currency during a few years of the life of the individual; they are taught to the young recruits of the childhood-group, and dropped as the child takes his place amongst the grown-ups: they are always in currency but unused and ignored by three-quarters of the population.

857 A certain number of these plays are sexual; thus the play of marriage always ends in simulated copulation; if the 'bride' is
864 another boy, the children tie their penises together. From about the age of ten children at marriage feasts and similar gatherings are
[839] likely to sort themselves into pairs and attempt copulation; there is also a certain amount of mutual masturbation among boys. (Everybody, young and old alike, denied the practice of adolescent masturbation, and since they were perfectly frank on all other questions I have no reason to suppose that they were not telling the truth.) Adult Lepchas consider such sex-play extremely funny,
[522] though very childish; far from disapproving of the children, they are more likely to egg them on.

A ten-year-old child should know perfectly well the permissible and forbidden sexual partners in the neighbourhood; there is the general prohibition against sleeping with *num-neu*, and usually also a catalogue of permissible partners. In point of fact there is considerable variation of the age at which the incest barriers are recognised concretely; some nine-year-old children knew their relationship to everybody in the village, while twelve-year-old Ribu, for example, though he knew that he must not sleep with his *num-neu* was quite vague as to what people were actually included in that term. Ribu's ignorance may possibly be explained by the fact that his father was dead; it is essentially the rôle of the father to instruct his son in the rules of incest, and possibly Patek, his seventeen-year-old brother, had not done so.

857 Although adults never play with children, the children showed great pleasure when I used to play with them, and after I had been in Lingthem about six weeks used to manifest obvious excitement at my arrival, and if I was engaged in something else would do all they could to provoke me to play with them. The chief game that I used to play was to pretend to chase them; I would make one or two menacing steps in their direction, whereupon they would run about a quarter of a mile away, shrieking with laughter, and then

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sickness or misfortune befell, therefore deemed it requisite to propitiate them, which they did by offerings of rice, etc. The first fruits of the season were always offered to the Good Spirit. I may state that the purity of their belief was, at a period antecedent to our arrival, somewhat perverted by the introduction from Tibet of the Buddist religion; it has, and still has, however, but little hold on them. . . .

"The British Government has again conferred on the Sikkim ruler an annual and larger allowance, to be enjoyed as long as order is maintained in his dominions. Since then the country has become more tranquil and, as far as the snows (but no farther), is again thrown open to visitors. Sikkim, however, is fast deteriorating. The influx of the Bhutias has increased, and the power of the Buddhists has become firmly established; the Gurkhas have also commenced to settle in it, and the grandest and most glorious scenery in the world is becoming completely destroyed. With the destruction of the forests in Sikkim, the charm of the country will pass away, the climate will change, and unless speedy measures be taken to prevent it, the Lepchas will pine, and in time cease to exist. Much more might be said, but enough has been represented to account for the deplorable fall of the Lepchas.

"Of the language I cannot speak too highly. The simple and primitive state in which the Lepchas lived is admirably shown. It has no primary words (beyond the words for gold and silver) to express money, merchants or merchandise, fairs or markets. Their peaceful and gentle character is evinced by their numerous terms of tenderness and compassion, and by the fact that not one word of abuse exists in their language. . . . Of all the almost inconceivable diversity of trees with which the hills are covered; of all the almost incalculable variety of plants and flowers with which the forests are filled; the Lepchas can tell you the names of all, they can distinguish at a glance the difference in the species of each genus of plants, which would require the skill of a practised botanist to perceive; and this information